



THE VISION OF WATER 20/20

Looking Ahead in the Arkansas River Basin

APRIL 23-24, 2020 • SALIDA, CO

Draft Agenda — Subject to Change

Thursday, April 23

7:00 - 8:00 **REGISTRATION, COFFEE & REFRESHMENTS**

8:00 – 8:45 **POSTING OF THE COLORS**

Location: Theater

American Legion Post 64

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Terry Scanga, Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Greg Felt, Chaffee County Commissioner

9:00 – 10:15 **PLENARY SESSION**

Location: Theater

Wildfire Mitigation: Looking Ahead – The Next Big Challenges and Solutions

The health of our forests is deteriorating, and we experience a new wildfire each year in the Arkansas River Basin. We have admitted there is a problem but now what are we going to do? What existing or future policies will help us or hurt us in our endeavors? How will we get the work done? What is the current state of the timber industry? What are our most pressing issues from a market perspective? How and why should the water community be involved? Join us for a discussion with experts in the field of forestry to discuss the future of forestry, what issues will we face and how do we overcome them.



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Moderator: Mark Shea, Watershed Planning Supervisor, Colorado Springs Utilities (ABRT Chair)

- Rick Cables- VP Natural Resource & Conservation Vail Resorts (Former USFS Rocky MTN Regional Forester)
- Molly Pitts- Executive Director, Colorado Timber Industry Association
- Andy Lerch- Lead Forester, Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative
- Alex Rudney – Silviculturist, US Forest Service

10:15 – 10:30 **BREAK** (coffee & refreshments)

10:30 – 11:45 **PLENARY SESSION – Before and After The Fire, Cont'd**

Location: Theater

[The Fire is Out but the Challenge isn't Over: Exploring the Challenges and Solutions in Post-Fire Recovery](#)

Wildland fires with erratic behavior have increased in every watershed across Colorado. The Arkansas River Watershed had the most expensive, the Waldo Canyon Fire (2012), and the most destructive, the Black Forest Fire (2013), in Colorado. Over the past five years, the Arkansas Basin has experienced numerous fires, including Junkins, Beulah Hills, Hayden Pass, Spring Creek, and now, the Decker fire. This is the new norm, and we must be prepared to deal with the effects of post-fire.

We now recognize the impacts wildland fire has on watersheds, water for municipal, agricultural, recreational, and environmental uses. Water quality and quantity is a value at risk that is undervalued when discussing the impacts of post-fire flooding. When a new fire emerges in a new community, it is devastating and painful to know what to do next. Support, resources and education are needed for communities dealing with post-fire conditions who must navigate after the flames. A timely and organized response is essential to the success of post-fire recovery.



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Join our panel for a discussion on what we've learned in post-fire recovery and why the water community should be involved. Hear about recovery efforts that are underway across the basin (Spring Creek, Hayden, & Decker) and explore new techniques and tools that are being utilized. Lastly, this group will discuss existing barriers, lessons learned, and future solutions.

Moderator: Chelsey Nutter, Executive Director, Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative

- David Steffen - Recovery Coordinator, Arkansas River Watershed Collaborative
- Greg Felt - Chaffee County Commissioner
- Luke Javernick - River Science
- Michael Blazewicz - Round River Design

11:45 – 12:00 **Transition Break**

12:00 – 1:00 **LUNCHEON**
Location: Ballroom

12:15 **2020 BOB APPEL "FRIEND OF THE ARKANSAS" AWARD**
Location: Ballroom
Presented by Jean Van Pelt, 2019 Bob Appel Award Recipient

12:30 – 1:00 **LUNCHEON SPEAKERS**
Weather & Climate – Statewide Trends
Russ Schumacher, Colorado State Climatologist
Nolan Doesken, Colorado Water Institute



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1:15 – 2:45 CONCURRENT SESSION 1

Location: Theater	Location: Annex Rooms
<p>Water Conservation and Storage – <i>The Unappreciated Connection</i></p> <p>Former Governor Hickenlooper once stated that any conversation about water in Colorado must begin with conservation. The Colorado Water Plan sets aggressive goals for both additional storage and water conservation, yet their important connection to each other is often underappreciated. This panel will explore how additional water storage is essential for water users in realizing the benefits of conserved water and will discuss the role of water conservation programs in achieving public acceptance and permits for water storage projects.</p>	<p>Integrated Water Management Planning – <i>What it means for stakeholders in Colorado and the future of water in the Arkansas River Basin</i></p> <p>Stream management plans are a key component of the Colorado Water Plan, which requires that 80% of “prioritized” streams across the state develop an SMP to identify the various resource needs of stakeholders within each basin by 2030. While a primary focus of these SMPs is to protect or enhance environmental and recreational assets, many other water users (including agricultural and municipal providers) are at the table and realizing the benefits too. Integrated Water Management Plans have evolved out of the SMP process to engage a wider community of stakeholders and create multi-benefit projects that aim to protect environmental and recreational resources, maintain working lands, and strengthen Colorado’s water supply. This session, led by the Colorado Ag Water Alliance, will explore the various ways that neighboring basins have implemented water management plans to ensure multiple benefits for agriculture, municipalities, recreation, and the environment. Participants will also learn more about ongoing water planning and management efforts in the Upper Arkansas River Basin.</p>



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<p><u>Moderator: Greg Johnson or Kevin Reidy (TBD) Colorado Water Conservation Board</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pat Wells, General Manager, Water Resources and Demand Management, Colorado Springs Utilities • Greg Fisher, Denver Water, Manager of Demand Planning • Mike Fink, City of Fountain, Water Superintendent • Rich Vidmar, Aurora Water, Integrated Basin and Ecosystem Services Manager 	<p><u>Moderator: Greg Peterson, Executive Director, Colorado Ag Water Alliance</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jesse Kruthaupt, Trout Unlimited • Heather Dutton, San Luis Valley Water Conservancy District • Terry Scanga, Upper Arkansas Water Conservancy District
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2:45 – 3:00 BREAK {coffee & refreshments}

3:00 – 5:30 TOURS
Advanced reservations for all tours required. Sign up online via registration.

- 1. Bike Tour to the Mt. Shavano Fish Hatchery**
 On this tour we'll travel by bike along the banks of the Arkansas River to the Mt. Shavano Hatchery where we'll learn about hatchery operations from Colorado Parks and Wildlife staff. One of the largest trout units in the state, Colorado Parks & Wildlife's Mt. Shavano Hatchery annually produces 420,000 Whirling Disease Negative catchable (10 inch) trout, and about 2.6 million sub-catchable (2-5 inch) trout and kokanee salmon. Rainbow trout, Snake River cutthroat, cutthroat/rainbow crosses (cutbow), as well as kokanee salmon are raised at the unit. Mt Shavano Hatchery personnel also operate the nearby Mt. Ouray Hatchery and Salida Isolation Unit. Mt. Ouray Hatchery produces sub-catchable rainbow trout and kokanee salmon and the Salida Isolation Unit produces greenback and Rio Grande cutthroats. Cruiser bikes will be provided by Absolute Bikes and all tour participants will be required to submit rider information and sign a waiver in advance. Helmets



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(provided) are required and the tour will be limited to 15 participants. The 4-mile round trip route is a mix of pavement and gravel, suitable for riders of all abilities. There will be stops along the way to highlight points of interest and facts about Salida's rich history. Get outside, get moving, and head to the hatchery the Salida way- on a bike!

Drive to Mt. Shavano Fish Hatchery Tour

For those who wish to drive instead of bike to the Mt. Shavano Hatchery you are welcome to do so.

2. Whitewater Rafting

Test your limits (and your chill factor!) while whitewater rafting on the Arkansas River. Enjoy a six-mile float trip from Big Bend to the Salida boat ramp organized by the Arkansas River Outfitters Association. A van shuttle, booties, and splash jackets will be provided. All participants will paddle with the guide unless an oar boat is requested. Bring quick drying clothing for on the river and a change of clothing for the Percolation and Runoff social event that follows.

3. Float Fishing

We only have 4 spots available for this unique opportunity. For experienced fly fishers only. This trip will float behind the rafting trip and finish at the same time. Eligible participants should have their own gear and be competent casters. This is not a beginner's trip. For more information, contact Bob Hamel, 719-371-3172 or director@raftthebest.com

4. Bus Tour to Nestlé Waters North America's Ruby Mountain Springs Site

On this tour, guests will hear from the Nestlé Waters North America's (Nwana) Natural Resource Team – Western Region, who have been managing and maintaining this 126-acre spring site along the Arkansas River since 2008. Visitors will gain an understanding of Nwana's springs operations up close, with visits to the boreholes to learn how spring water is produced and down along the property with various points of interest. Stops along the way will include an overview of the extensive reclamation and restoration project along the banks of the Arkansas River, which involved removing a dilapidated fish hatchery and restoring the area to a more natural state, enhancing the function of



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aquatic riparian and wetland habitats, as well as improving the scenic vista for Chaffee County's rafting enthusiasts. Visitors will also learn about NRNA's extensive land management plans to improve bighorn sheep access and forage, cattle grazing management, and wetlands protections on the property. This site is also under application for a conservation easement with Colorado Parks & Wildlife, further preserving and protecting the land. This walking tour involves some uneven ground; it is advised to wear close-toed shoes that can get muddy or wet.

6:00 p.m. – until the lights go out!

PERCOLATION AND RUNOFF – SOCIAL EVENT

Dinner, not-so-silent auction, drinks and more!

Location: Little Cambodia Restaurant

SPONSORED BY ARKANSAS RIVER OUTFITTERS ASSOCIATION

Following your tour, walk next door to Little Cambodia for the 2020 Percolation and Runoff social event. Enjoy a delicious dinner, a not-so-silent auction to raise money for our scholarship fund, and drinks. All on us! Hands down, this is one of the most fun parts of our annual Water Forum. An event you don't want to miss!

Friday, April 24

- 7:30 – 8:00 **REGISTRATION, COFFEE & REFRESHMENTS**
- 8:00 – 8:15 **INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME**
Location: Theater
Ben Scanga, Mayor, Town of Poncha Springs
- 8:15 – 8:45 **KEYNOTE SPEAKER**
Kate Greenberg, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture
- 9:00 – 10:15 **PLENARY SESSION**



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Location: Theater

Women in Water – Honoring Current and Future Women Water Professionals

In the spirit of inspiring the next generation of the women in water, this session will feature some of our industry's most seasoned female water professionals. The format will be a conversation with the panelists including a Q&A about lessons learned, tales of grit and determination, and more. The ARBWF wants to raise awareness about the newly formed nonprofit, Women in Water Scholarship Fund. Their purpose is to help young women prepare to significantly contribute to the western water community in which we all work. It encourages young women to pursue fulfilling careers in developing, managing and conserving water. This annual \$5,000 scholarship is awarded to a woman pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in preparation for a career in any element of water resources, including water law, communications, community and government relations, or engineering.

Moderator: Christine Arbogast, Kogovsek and Associates

- Amy Beatie, Deputy Attorney General, Natural Resources and Environment
- Kate Greenberg, Colorado Commissioner of Agriculture
- Becky Mitchell, Director of Colorado Water Conservation Board
- Abby Ortega, Water Resources Manager, Colorado Springs Utilities
- Chane Polo, Colorado Water Congress

10:15 – 10:30 **BREAK** (coffee & refreshments)

10:30 – 11:45 - **CONCURRENT SESSION 2**

Location: Theater	Location: Annex Rooms
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<p>The Isn't Your Grandparent's Operation Anymore – Looking Ahead at the Future of Ranching in the Arkansas River Basin</p> <p>For generations, ranchers in the Upper Arkansas Valley have been operating in conjunction with the water and land entrusted to them and their families. This session will open with the Colorado Cattlemen's Association sharing survey results on the water-related needs of agricultural producers. Following, we will dig in to learn more about how ranchers are adapting to an ever-changing landscape that includes: development pressures, the threat of prolonged and more intense fire season, foreseen reduction in available irrigation water, and more. Can ranching survive, even flourish, in a world where the producer is required to meet many more expectations and demands besides growing nutritious and safe food? Join us for a roundtable discussion on the future of ranching in the Arkansas River Basin.</p>	<p>NRCS Snow Survey and Water Supply Forecasting - Using SNOTEL technology and data now and in the future</p> <p>Karl Wetlaufer with the NRCS Snow Survey program will lead a session covering a wide range of topics relating to the history, availability, and different uses of SNOTEL, streamflow forecast, and other water supply data available to the public. Over the last several years the NRCS has developed many new products (e.g. the Interactive Map) that allow for many new and novel ways to look at water supply data for a wide variety of user groups. This session will be an opportunity to learn about exactly where the data comes from and explore the best ways to access and use it for different purposes. Participants will discuss the most effective ways to get and analyze the valuable data to make decisions in their areas of interest.</p>
<p>Moderator: Matt Heimerich, Palmer Land Trust</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phil Brink, Colorado Cattlemen's Ag Water NetWORK Consulting Coordinator • Tim Canterbury, Colorado Cattleman's Association, Rancher • Steve Oswald, Oswald Cattle Co. 	<p>Moderator: Bob Hamel, AROA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Wetlaufer, Colorado Data Collection Office, USDA - NRCS

11:45 – 12:00 **Transition Break**



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12:00 – 12:15 **CLOSING REMARKS**

Location: Theater

Paul Fanning, Legislative Appointee to the Arkansas River Basin Roundtable

12:15 – 1:30 **LUNCHEON**

Location: Ballroom

Cañon City High School Student Presentations

Presented by Luke Javernick, River Science

Recognition - Arkansas River Basin Water Forum Scholarship Recipients (2020)

Presented by Rena Griggs, Colorado Parks and Wildlife